

Regional Board of Superintendents' Meeting

Northern Rhode Island Collaborative

Main Office

2352 Mendon Road

Cumberland, RI 02864

Minutes

A regular meeting of the Regional Board of Superintendents was held at the Main Office, 2352 Mendon Road, Cumberland, RI 02864, on **Tuesday, November 9, 2004**. The meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m. by Mr. Joseph Nasif, Chairman.

In addition to Mr. Nasif, the following board members were present: Dr. D'Acchioli, Mr. DiPrete, Mrs. Hanley, and Dr. Ottoviano, as well as, Julian E. MacDonnell, Jr., Executive Director, Robert E. Fricklas, Assistant Director, and Eugene LaBonte, Business Manager.

Mr. Nasif entertained a motion to approve today's agenda, which was moved by Dr. D'Acchioli and seconded by Mr. DiPrete, carried by all.

Routine Matters:

Dr. D'Acchioli motioned to approve Items 1 - 5, which was seconded by Dr. Ottoviano, carried by all.

1.0 The Minutes of the Meeting of October 5, 2004

<u>Moved:</u>	Dr. D'Acchioli	<u>Approved:</u>	Mr. DiPrete
<u>Seconded:</u>	Dr. Ottoviano		Ms. Hanley
			Mr. Nasif

2.0 Bills for the month of October 2004

<u>Moved:</u>	Dr. D'Acchioli	<u>Approved:</u>	Mr. DiPrete
<u>Seconded:</u>	Dr. Ottoviano		Ms. Hanley
			Mr. Nasif

Executive Session:

The Board agreed to take Executive Session out of order.

Communications and Reports:

3.0 Nothing to report

Appointments:

4.0 Appointment of John Petrella, RAP Teacher

The Executive Director recommended the appointment of John Petrella as a new Teacher in the RAP Program.

Moved: Dr. D'Acchioli

Seconded: Dr. Ottoviano

Approved: Mr. DiPrete

Ms. Hanley

Mr. Nasif

New Business:

5.0 Nothing to report.

Old Business:

The Board agreed to take Item #8 out of order at this time.

8.0 Virtual High Schools Presentation - Wendy Papkoff

Mr. Nasif welcomed Ms. Wendy Papkoff of Virtual High Schools, Inc. at 1:11 p.m. for a presentation on the Virtual High Schools Program.

Ms. Papkoff provided brochures to the Board and began her presentation with a brief history on the beginnings of their eight years of operation as a partner with high schools around the world. VHS was funded for the first five years by a \$10M grant with the Department of Education, and during the last three years, transferred to a non-profit status and have sustained through membership fees.

Highlights of the program are:

- Allows high schools to expand their curriculum with 180 on-line courses to meet the diverse learning needs of students;
- It solves scheduling conflicts;
- Collaborates with students throughout the nation;
- Provides professional development for teachers.

Ms. Papkoff advised that the participating school provides:

- One net course and one net teacher; (25 students per semester)
- One site coordinator;
- Internet access.

VHS provides:

- Training for teachers (NIM & TLC)
- Hosting of the virtual school – students can log on anywhere there's an Internet connection;
- Tech support.

The role of the site coordinator:

- Provides tech support to the students and teachers;
- Serves as a physical link;
- Serves as teacher presence to parents
- Materials coordinator (The materials for the course are paid for by the participating school).
- Participates in site coordinator orientation. The next orientation is scheduled for March 16th.

The role of the teacher:

- Participates in NIM training (15 week course beginning January 15th) or TLC training which begins next Fall.

Quality control:

- Each course is monitored each semester
- Teachers have one-on-one mentoring
- All teachers are certified in the U.S.
- All schools are surveyed each year.

Benefits to the students:

- New course offerings
- Diminishes course scheduling conflicts
- Develops research skills

Training fees for professional development are \$3,500 for teachers and \$1,500 for site coordinators.

Membership fees: full participation - \$6,500 annual fee (25 seats per semester) includes teacher and site coordinator. Student only - \$8,750 (10 seats per semester) includes site coordinator only.

Ms. Papkoff also indicated that there is an Online AP Academy Grant opportunity available to low-income schools that have more than 40% of their students on free or reduced lunch

programs. There is also a middle school component to the program.

Discussion and questions followed.

Mr. MacDonnell reported that VHS is currently not offered in Rhode Island and that the four Collaboratives are interested in a joint effort to bring this program to Rhode Island. A minimum of five schools are needed to participate through the Collaboratives. The fee structure has not yet been developed.

Mr. Nasif thanked Ms. Papkoff for her presentation and she left the meeting at 1:55 p.m.

6.0 Annual Meeting Date

The Executive Director reported that as a result of a survey of available dates by the districts, Wednesday, March 16, 2005 has been selected as the date of the Collaborative's Annual Meeting.

Moved: Dr. D'Acchioli

Approved: Ms. Hanley

Seconded: Mr. DiPrete

Mr. Nasif

Dr. Ottoviano

7.0 Board Meeting Dates

The Executive Director reported that as discussed at last month's meeting, a change in Board meeting dates may increase attendance. A survey of the Board resulted in the consensus to keep the scheduled Board meeting dates as is, the first Tuesday of each month.

9.0 Professional Development Opportunities

The Executive Director reported that as suggested at the last meeting by Mr. O'Brien that the Collaborative become more involved in professional development opportunities, the re-establishment of the Curriculum Leadership Team will take place with their first meeting on Monday, November 22, 2004 at 12:30 p.m. Mr. MacDonnell also plans on developing an educational leadership academy similar to the program at West Bay Collaborative. He indicated that he met with representatives from R. I. College who are interested in working with us in developing workshops and seminars. The program is tentatively planned to begin in January 2005.

During discussion, Mrs. Hanley suggested including Providence College in the plans for this program due to the existing relationship the Collaborative already has with them. Dr. D'Acchioli suggested that professional development days should be coordinated throughout the districts in order for all to take advantage of such a program. Mr. MacDonnell will survey the districts for their planned professional development days for 2005-06 and will discuss at the next meeting.

10.0 Discussion Update from Dr. Thomas DiPaola Meeting

The Executive Director reported that according to discussion at the last meeting regarding

the new building, he met with Dr. Thomas DiPaola regarding the issue of building a separate school. Dr. DiPaola expressed concern with the Collaborative building a new school with no opportunity for inclusion which would go against the intent of IDEA. One of the highlights of RIDE's recent OSEP visit was the need to reduce the number of out of district student placements in Rhode Island.

During discussion, Mrs. Hanley advised that in her previous discussions with Dr. DiPaola about the Collaborative's new building, the intent of the new school building was not to be an isolated self-contained building. The idea for an inclusive preschool model was discussed.

Mr. MacDonnell advised that there are several different ways to approach the new building – one is to have the colleges work with us to enhance teacher training utilizing model classrooms. He met with Mr. Richard Dixon of R. I. College and advised that they are not interested primarily in special education but in a more rounded opportunity for their teachers.

Mrs. Hanley suggested that the next step would be to identify how the new building would best service the Collaborative. What will be its purpose – a new preschool, all day Kindergarten? She questioned if we had enrollment projections to identify where the need is.

(Mr. James DiPrete left the meeting at 2:10 p.m.)

Dr. Fricklas suggested doing a cohort analysis. He also advised that according to the districts' Special Ed Directors, the number of emotional/behavioral students in Grades 1-6 has increased – we are currently at maximum. He is investigating the possible opening of two additional classrooms to serve early elementary through middle school RAP students.

Mrs. Hanley stated that the future of the new building needs to be determined and then brought before the Board.

Informational Matters:

11.0 New Collaborative Classes - East Providence

The Executive Director reported that he and Dr. Fricklas had been approached by the East Providence school district to develop a program for their primary level autistic students ages 3-6 in PreK. Mr. MacDonnell advised that they met with Mr. Manuel Vinhateiro, Superintendent, to discuss their needs and the financing. Mr. MacDonnell indicated that the East Bay Collaborative was not interested in offering such a program.

Dr. Fricklis will solicit East Bay Special Ed Directors to see if there is a cooperative need for such a program.

12.0 Teacher Assistant Network Session - January 2005

The Executive Director is providing information on RIDE's next session of the Teacher

Assistant Network.

13.0 Legal Advisories

The Executive Director is providing information on legal advisories received from Attorney Ben Scungio.

Executive Session:

Pursuant to Chapter 42-46-5(a) 1&2 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, Mr. Nasif entertained a motion to adjourn to Executive Session, which was moved by Dr. D'Acchioli, seconded by Dr. Ottoviano. A roll call vote was taken by the Secretary and the motion was carried by all.

The closed session ended at 2:45 p.m.

With no further information to report, Mr. Nasif entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:45 p.m., which was moved by Dr. D'Acchioli and seconded by Mrs. Hanley, carried by all.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra A. Jannetta